

Looking for

[THE PRESIDENT](#)[THE STATE HOUSE](#)[PRESIDENTIAL INITIATIVES](#)[GALLERY](#)[ARCHIVES](#)[CONTACT US](#)[The President of the Republic](#) > [THE STATE HOUSE](#) > History of the Chateau – Le Reduit

History of the Chateau – Le Reduit

[Add To](#)[Send To Friend](#)[Print](#)

French Period (1715 – 1810)

Le Réduit was the brainchild of Barthelemy David, then successor of Labourdonnais as governor and at a time when the historical Anglo-French rivalry had reached its pinnacle.

In **July 1747**, David wrote to the company to inform them of his project:

".. furthermore, I explained to the gentlemen officers, the idea I had of fortifying a place of retreat on the interior of the island where in case of attack, we can send over our women, children and most precious belongings, and from the very end of the haven, we would post troops to outwit the onslaught of our enemies, forcing them off the shores and to withdraw back from lack of food and water without invading any settlements."

He settled on an ideal site, a spur about 900 feet from the Moka Range, a triangular headland between steep gorges of the rivers; a scenery that has fascinated visitors for centuries. At the foot of the escarpment, known as Le Bout de Monde, the meeting of two rivers forming a confluence that pursues its course towards the sea.

The construction of the castle began in **1746** and was completed in **1748**.

Governor David, unfortunately, was not able to appreciate the fruits of his efforts as he had to leave the Isle de France in **1753**.



In **1778**, the new governor, Antoine de Guiran rebuilt the castle at its actual location. A year later, in **1779**, he became the first governor to die in Le Réduit.

On two occasions in the years, **1783** and **1796**, Le Réduit was threatened with the possibility of sale owing the high expenses incurred in its reconstruction. Fortunately with the timely intervention of the Comte de Malartic and the events following the French Revolution, the castle was saved.

Subsequent to these events, the last French governor, General Decaen was able to restore the estate to "its original entirety".

English Period: (1810-1968)



In **1810**, Sir Robert Townsend Farquhar was appointed as the first English governor and his keen interest in the gardens of Le Réduit prompted him to bring over a gardener assist. Under the aegis of the new governor, two famous botanists, Boyer and Helsenberg, explored Madagascar and the African coasts in search of rare plants for the gardens.

Between **1823-1828**, Sir Lowry Cole, the successor of Farquhar, a horse trail was set up and for some time Le Réduit had its own race track.

Under the administration of William Gomm (**1842-1849**) and guidance of Thomas Tribe, the gardens regained their former splendour and were the recipients of various awards at the Royal Society of Arts and Sciences exhibition.

During the **1860s**, Lady Barkly had a shade house built to gather different specimens of ferns and orchids including exotic species.

After the violent cyclone of **1868**, the Admiral Quarters and its furniture were meticulously rehabilitated and was used by His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburg during his visit in **1870**.

Under the administration of Sir Hesketh Bell, the gardens of Le Réduit underwent significant changes. Upon his arrival he created a patch of ferns and had an impressive pergola around the tennis court of Lady Bowen and had a second court constructed in **1918**.



He ordered some twenty species of plants from the Kew Gardens and Ceylan (present day Sri Lanka). In **1927**, he won the silver medal during an exposition at Pamplemousses for the quality of his products from the vegetable garden of le Réduit.

In **1921**, he constructed a memorial named "Le Temple de l'Amour" in the memory of Pierre Félix Barthelemy David. This was erected near the ornamental lake at the end of the garden not far from the "Bout du Monde". The memorial has a commemorative marble inscription on the floor of the memorial and which reads:

"TO M. BARTHELEMY DAVID / Gouverneur de l'Isle de France 1746 / the creator of Le Réduit / his Grateful Successors".

During the last years of the colonial era, Le Réduit welcomed various influential personalities namely:

- Her Royal Highness Princess Margaret from September to **October 1956**
- Her Royal Highness The Queen Mother in **March 1958**

Post- Independence period (1968-1992)



On **12 March 1968** Mauritius achieved independence and Sir John Shaw Rennie became the first Governor-General.

In **September 1968**, Sir Arthur Leonard Williams succeeded Sir John.

In **1973**, Sir Abdool Raman Mohamed Osman was first Mauritian to become the Governor-General of Mauritius. Even after independence, Le Réduit remained generously hospitable. Her Highness Princess Alexandra visited on no less than four occasions.

Sir Raman was honored to welcome distinguished personalities notably Her Imperial Highness Princess Shams Pahlavi of Iran in **September 1976**, followed by Her Excellency Mrs. Indira Gandhi of the Republic of India, and Mr. and Mrs. Sanjay Gandhi in October of the same year. Their Royal Highnesses Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburg visited in **March 1972**.

Sir Raman Osman retired on **31 October 1977**. From that date, the office of Governor-General was held in an acting capacity by Sir Henry Garrioch.

Between **March 1979** to **December 1983**, Sir Dayendranath Burrenchobay, K.B.E., C.M.G., G.V.O. was appointed as Governor-General.

He was succeeded by Sir Seewoosagar Ramgoolam until his death in December 1985. Upon the passing away of Sir Seewoosagar Ramgoolam, Sir Veerasamy Ringadoo was designated as Governor-General as from **January 1986**.

During his stay, he received the following personalities at Le Réduit:

His Excellency Shri Rajiv Gandhi, Prime Minister of the Republic of India in **July 1986**.



His Excellency Mr. Didier Ratsiraka, President of the Republic of Madagascar in **March 1990**

Her Royal Highness Princess Anne of England in **February 1991**

His Excellency Robert Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe in **May 1991**



[Homepage](#)
[Sign in](#)
[New User](#)

THE PRESIDENT

[Her Excellency, Mrs A. G. Fakim](#)
[Office of the President](#)
[Former Presidents](#)

The role of the President

[Powers of the president](#)
[Committee on the Prerogative of Mercy](#)

THE STATE HOUSE

[History of the Chateau – Le Reduit](#)

PRESIDENTIAL INITIATIVES

[Le Reduit Appeal Fund](#)
[Committee on the Promotion of National Unity](#)
[Presidential Lectures](#)

Planet Earth Institute

[Science and Technology Enrolment Programme \(STEP\)](#)
[Her Excellency Mrs Ameenah Gurib-Fakim PhD Scholarship Programme](#)

GALLERY

[Photo Gallery](#)
[Video Gallery](#)

CONTACT

ARCHIVES

[Past Events](#)
[Speeches](#)
[Press Releases](#)
[Photo Gallery](#)

News

[Contact Us](#) [Disclaimer](#) [Feedback](#) [Map](#)

[About SSL certificates](#)